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ABSTRACT

Using a deliberately confusing and frustrating game exercise, the author attempts to present the student's perception of the conflicting demands that the school system places upon him. Despite the dearth of literature on behavior therapy as it relates to the adolescent, the author believes that the behavior therapist can help the adolescent. After exploring the tenets of behavior therapy, the author posits that the school might constitute an excellent place for the use of contingency contracts. An adolescent's ability to abide by his contract tells those around him that he is becoming more mature and responsible. He tends to live by the image which he himself has set up by abiding by his contract which further reinforces the attitudes of the adults around him and the spiral of adaptive behaviors. The report includes an example of a family behavioral contract that states general and specific privileges and responsibilities. (Author/LAA)

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MOBIUS STRIPS, PERQUACKEY, AND THE DUTCH CHOCOLATE APPLE

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Paper presented to the '73 Convention of the
American Personnel and Guidance Association
Program number ACES 286
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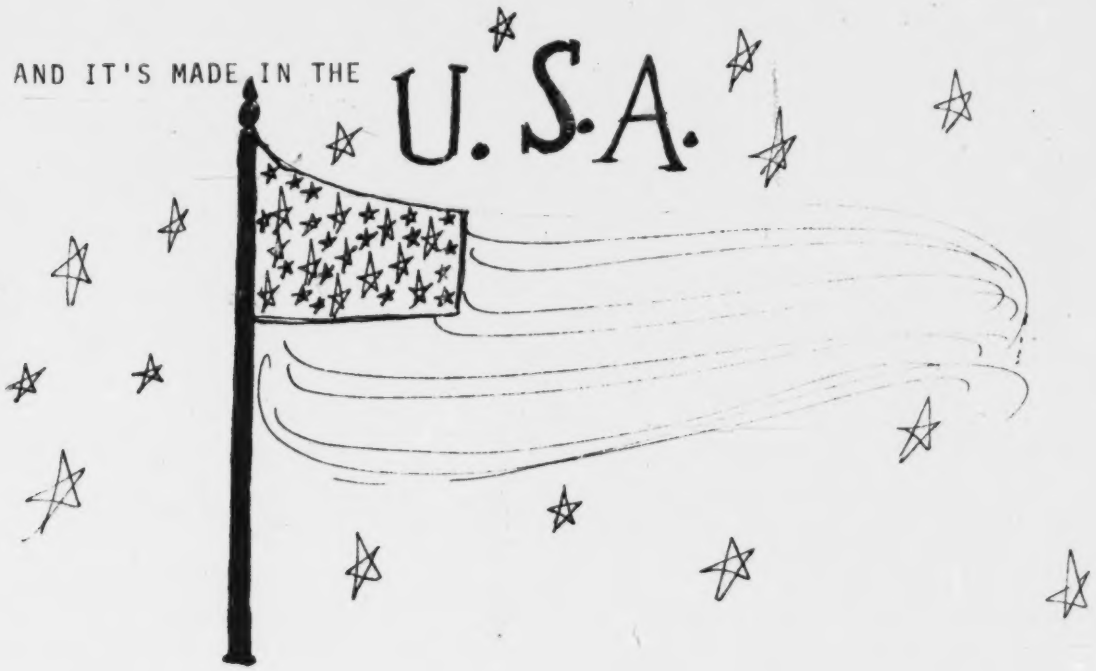
CG 008 143

Chairman and Discussant--Dr. Walter Liston
Presenter--Miss Carole Berlin

Hey, Educators: Here's a new game we can all play.

It's called "ADOLESCENT TURMOIL, WHEN IT REALLY HURTS!"

AND IT'S MADE IN THE U.S.A.



It's a variation on the game you probably played when you were a kid, the one where you break the clock, and then try to fix it again, only in this game we play it with REAL PEOPLE!

Ready?

O.K.; turn the page

Carole Berlin, Presenter
Walter Liston, Chairman

For Presentation
A.P.G.A. '73 Convention
San Diego, California

This is just a little introduction, to get you warmed up. All good players warm up before they start.

Now, the players are these:

The Breakers, The Fixers, and The Adolescents.

You could be an adolescent; I'd rather be a fixer anyhow, and there are plenty of breakers. In fact, there may be too many. Couple of kids dropped out yesterday. I guess the game must have gotten too rough.

Well, team, that's what we warm up for. Don't want to get broken just because we're not warmed up, right?

OKAY, before we start to play, let's have a little typical adolescent warmup here.

Just relax. Remember, you're just a kid; no real responsibilities to hang over your head, and keep you from enjoying the game.

Now, after you turn the page, just follow the directions. Contingencies may be implicit, but the directions are quite clear.

GO ON TO PAGE 3

DO NOT LOOK BACK

PLEASE ASSEMBLE THE FOLLOWING MATERIALS
AT YOUR DESK BEFORE YOU READ ANY FURTHER:

1 . . .marks-a-lot pen or ballpoint

1 . . .pair scissors, small or large.

GO ON TO PAGE 4

DO NOT LOOK BACK

PLEASE FOLLOW ALL DIRECTIONS CAREFULLY.
(The little numbers are for your teacher; you may disregard them.) (Educators: see Page 10.)

If you have never seen a Mobius Strip before, please open the envelope which comes with this booklet now.(1)

You will notice, as you remove the contents and lay them out on your desk, that there are two beautiful silver Mobius Strips, a smaller and a larger. They are made of Mylar, a synthetic industrial material.(3)

As you can see, the smaller of the strips has a blue dot on top, and the larger a pink one.(4)

You may keep the large (pink) one and take it home with you. The smaller (blue) one, however, must be used at your desk as directed.

The large strip, you will notice, has the beginning of a dotted line of arrows, moving away from the word "GO." With your marks-a-lot pen, complete the dotted line. (Do not use ballpoint, as the Mylar of which the strip is made will tear.) Make this line all the way around, carefully. Work slowly, so that you do not tear the Mylar.

You will notice that, unlike a circular strip, the Mobius strip turns out to have only ONE SIDE. If it did not, you would have had to lift your pencil(5) to get the line over onto the other side. Isn't that interesting? The reason it has only one side, obviously, is that one end was turned 180 degrees before the two ends were joined.(6)

Now, with your scissors, cut along the dotted line. Do not worry about tearing the Mylar, as it is quite sturdy. Just cut right along, in the direction of the arrows.

Are you through? Good. Now you should have two strips. If you have only one long one, and not two long ones, you must have forgotten to cut the halved strip in half again, as directed above.

With your two joined strips in your left hand, please turn the page.

DO NOT LOOK BACK.

GO ON TO PAGE 6

THIS PAGE IS FOR PEOPLE WHO ARE CONFUSED AT THIS POINT.

If you are not confused, go directly to pages 10 and 11.

If, on the other hand you are indeed confused, irritated, or even angry, you should continue with this booklet. You may wear this cheery yellow button on your lapel; you will notice that it makes you an honorary adolescent.

GO ON TO PAGE 7

Ed. Note: Jerry Farber has a lot to say about this pretty little button, although I'm sure he'd agree that in reality it's invisible. For his definition of NIGGER, turn to page 12.

Now that you are an adolescent, you must observe the following rules and procedures:

Obey the law

Obey your parents

Obey your teachers

Obey your minister

Obey the teaching of your own heart; Know Thyself.

Why?

Happiness! Fulfillment!

That's what it's all about.

----------Isn't it?

Your daily life is rather simple. All you really need to do is go to school. You have no real responsibilities, no real concerns, other than doing well in school, making friends, and learning to be a good citizen. School begins at 8 A.M.; it lasts until 3 P.M., and it only takes about 18 years of your life to complete. Goodby, good luck, and HAVE FUN!

Please turn to page 8 for your first assignment.

"School is where everybody goes to learn and have fun, and meet the gang. I go to school, and I like it."

Lord Fauntleroy

Please write in the space below ten reasons why you would like to go to school too.

It is very important that you fill in this space. BUT BE NEAT. Your school record begins right here. You will be in school until you are at least 16. If you don't learn to like it, you may get in trouble with the law. This is called Juvenile Delinquency. Juvenile Delinquency is UNDESIRABLE.

Please write your answers legibly. The machine will break if you do not. Your cooperation is therefore being requested.

1. Do you like school?
2. How would you change it if you could?
3. If you tell lies, you get a pimple on your tongue.
   True _____ or False _____?

4. Ten reasons for liking school:

Remember ******* BE NEAT.

GO ON TO PAGE 9 WHEN YOU ARE FINISHED.

DO NOT LOOK BACK.

Choose the sanest, most sensible answer:

What should you do if you see someone bleeding?

*stop the flow of blood immediately (*best answer)
giggle
ignore it
pretend it's ketchup
write a report about it
photograph it

What is the most sensible thing to do if a person is hitting you?

*hit him back
*tell him to stop (*either of these is acceptable)
cry

What should you do if he doesn't stop hitting you, after you've done everything you can?

hit <u>him</u>, harder than he hit <u>you</u>
get your friends together; stomp him good
*leave (*best answer)
cry
let him finish, and then go home and forget about it
none of the above
other _____

Suppose "he" is an Institution, from which you cannot run away? Suppose "he" is your Family, your Church, School, or Society-In-General? Suppose "he" is Juvenile Court?

What should you do?

What <u>will</u> you do, now that you're an adolescent?

Please think about this before you go on; the answer to this question is the kink which makes the circle into THE MOBIUS STRIP.

You may look back.

Then go on to page 10.

Although, if you'd like, you may turn to pages 34 and 35 first, to get an idea of how Ivan Pavlov used to play.

TO THE EDUCATOR

(The numbers on this page refer to the superscript on both the envelope-back and page 4. Please refer back to them as you read this page, to facilitate understanding.)

In this "directed discovery" booklet, the student should have the following insights:

1. Suppose you HAVE? Suppose this is one incident among many in your school career in which you are presented with material with which you are already familiar? An experiment by Barker, Dembo and Lewin (1941) with children's responses to frustration at having to go from complex to simpler toys teaches us that regression to a simpler level is a normal response; aggression is not the only way a child cries: I CANNOT SURVIVE! (Munsinger, 1971)

2. Conflicting demands have to be resolved by the organism with the cute yellow button. (See Page 6.) These are sometimes easily resolved when

3. sheer curiosity, a natural human drive, rushes to the fore. However, if one is punished for giving rein to this drive frequently enough, guess what happens? (Oh, Mr. Educator, isn't this FUN? Can YOU guess?)

4. "So two years later I found out the teacher had been color blind. Can you guess what it meant for me, to be calling blue pink and pink blue?" (True Story, LSUNO Student)
(I suppose it was meant as an exercise in mental discipline, to prepare one for the real world, don't you, Mr. Educator?)

5. Student: PENCIL? Teacher, you said MARKS-A-LOT!
Teacher: You knew what I MEANT, dammit.
Student: Nosuh, I sho'ly didn't know you meant marks-a-lot when you said pencil, suh, nosuh, I sho'ly didn't. If'n you say marks-a-lot, why you means marks-a-lot, just as sho as I'se standing here suh, I larned that aready. Suh.
(Well, that's what you get folks; Dumb niggers.)

6. Obviously.

NOTE:
There are no superscripts for the following two points:

1. You will note that having the booklet be true-to-reality SOMETIMES is more effective at maintaining anxiety levels than having it never be true. We call this a "partial reinforcement schedule." Guess what's being reinforced?

2. These are by no means the only insights to be gained from this booklet. Perhaps you have noticed some which we have not, or perhaps you would simply like to comment. Page 11 has been left blank for just that purpose.

PLEASE NOTE: If you keep any of your insights to yourself, we will think that you simply do not have any. This might mean that you get put into the dumb class. Being in the dumb class is UNDESIRABLE. You are therefore urged to tell us everything you think. You may use both sides of the page.

BLANK PAGE

Niggers, and students, are characterized by Farber as:

having separate and unequal dining facilities,
("If I eat in the student cafeteria, I become known as the educational equivalent of a niggerlover." [P. 90])

having separate washrooms,

coming under an (unwritten) anti-miscegenation law, barring student-faculty lovemaking,

being politically disenfranchised,
(". . .they have no voice in the decisions which affect their academic lives." [P. 90])

being expected to know their places,
(". . .the student calls the faculty member "Sir" or "Doctor" or "Professor"--and he smiles and shuffles some as he stands outside the professor's office waiting for permission to enter." [P. 91])

"The faculty tell him what courses to take . . . what to read, what to write, and, frequently, where to set the margins on his typewriter. They tell him what's true and what isn't. Some teachers insist that they encourage dissent but they're almost always jiving and every student knows it. TELL THE MAN WHAT HE WANTS TO HEAR OR HE'LL FAIL YOUR ASS OUT OF THE COURSE." (caps. mine) (P. 91)

and, when a teacher says "jump," students jump.

"WHAT SCHOOL AMOUNTS TO. . . for white and black alike, is a 12-year course in how to be slaves. What else could explain what I see in a freshman class? THEY'VE GOT THAT SLAVE MENTALITY: OBLIGING AND INGRATIATING ON THE SURFACE BUT HOSTILE AND RESISTANT UNDERNEATH." (P. 93) (Caps mine)

"They're unexplainably thick-witted and subject to frequent spells of laziness. They misread simple questions. They spend their nights mechanically outlining history chapters while meticulously failing to comprehend a word of what's in front of them." (P. 93)

And last of all, as Farber notes, "You can't educate slaves; you can only train them." (P. 98)

NOTE TO EDUCATOR:

John Holt, in How Children Fail, gives innumerable examples of how intelligence is destroyed in the schools. I don't quote him here largely because you have most likely read him; Farber, on the other hand, is considerably less well-known.

Well!

Looks like we've got a pretty clear picture of the adolescent.

poor slob; let's let him sit over here for a while.

Now we put Society and the Breakers over here,

and that leaves the FIXERS.

TURN THE PAGE, PLEASE.

The F*I*X*E*R*S and the F*I*X*E*D

FIXERS

You'll notice that they're divided
into three camps: the oldguard, (classical
Freudians), the new Behaviorists, and the Eclectics,
who try to stay clear of the battle
and utilize the techniques of both sides.

Naturally, since the Fixers are the only team with a real job to do, they spend much of their time squabbling as to whose method is better. This is quite an effective drain on energies.

They do this partly so that no-one will think
their team is too "together;" in this way
they can be left alone to carry on their work,
but they also do it for a HIGHER REASON:

It helps keep the game going.

And if you don't think that makes any sense, go back to the beginning of this booklet and try again.

Otherwise, go on to page 15

TREATMENT OF NEUROSIS

BEHAVIOR THERAPY STYLE

ABSTRACT:

All behavior is learned.

Neurosis is absurd behavior.

Therefore, Neurotic (absurd) behavior has been learned.

If a behavior has been learned, it can be unlearned, and a new behavior learned in its place.

Therefore, Neurotic behavior can be replaced, through learning, with non-neurotic behavior.

Learning is based on the principle of positive reinforcement--(associating the behavior with a pleasant stimulus/response)--and negative reinforcement--(associating performing the behavior with an unpleasant stimulus/response.)

Behavior which is positively reinforced tends to recur, while behavior which is negatively reinforced tends to drop out of the repertoire.

Therefore, by a combination of positive and negative reinforcement, (essentially), neurotic behaviors may be seen to drop in frequency, as the desired behaviors are found to rise in frequency.

As Hillel said, "the rest is commentary."

YOU MAY SKIP THE

FOLLOWING SECTION.

ABOUT BEHAVIOR THERAPY

Webster tells us that neurosis is a "functional disorder of the central nervous system, usually manifested by anxiety, phobias, obsessions or compulsions, but frequently displaying signs of somatic disorder involving any of the bodily symptoms with or without other subjective or behavioral manifestations."

Wolpe defines it for the behavior therapist, as "any persistent habit of unadaptive behavior acquired by learning in a physiologically normal organism." (Wolpe, 1966)

Eysenck, another of the behavioral therapy "greats," takes this one step further, telling us that "...there is no neurosis underlying the symptom, but merely the symptom itself. Get rid of the symptom and you have eliminated the neurosis." (italics his.) (Eysenck, 1960, p. 9)

This "getting rid of the symptom" of which Eysenck speaks appears to be neither difficult, arduous, time-consuming, nor particularly painful for either patient or therapist. There are no problems of transference, counter-transference, cathexis or de-cathexis to be dealt with; there are no deep and lengthy explorations of the psyche, and results have been so rapid that in most cases classical analysts are having a hard time taking the literature seriously. To give you an idea: a long-standing case of asthma is reported cured in 8 sessions by Walton (in Eysenck, p. 188), typists cramp in 3 (Liversedge & Sylvester, 1955, in Eysenck, p. 327), and long-standing fetishism in 9 (Raymond, 1956, in Eysenck, p. 303). Ticquers no longer tic, stammerers stop stammering, eneuretics stop wetting their beds at night, and, contrary to the expectations of the Freudian camp, there has been no incidence of a new symptom occuring to replace the old in nearly every instance.

From the patient's point of view, Behavior Therapy offers something else which classical psychiatry will not: Recall, only neurotic disorders are treated, that is, disorders involving the

central nervous system. As these can be readily reached and modified via physical means (as opposed to verbal), the patient is relieved of an enormous burden almost at once (which may be the whole key). He is initially informed that he is not expected to have his CNS under his direct control, and thus the whole swamp of guilt vanishes into thin air. The patient is told:

> "that his unpleasant reactions are due to emotional habits that he cannot help; that they have nothing to do with moral fiber or an unwillingness to get well; that similar reactions are easily produced in animals, who remain neurotic for just as long as the experimenter chooses; and that when the time comes when the experimenter decides to "cure" the neurosis, he applies to the problems methods that are determined by principles of learning." (Wolpe and Lazarus, 1966, p. 16)

As for these magical principles, let me quote Skinner; no-one says it better than he does in Walden Two:

> "It's what the science of behavior calls 'reinforcement theory.' The things that can happen to us fall into three classes. To some things we are indifferent. Other things we like--we want them to happen again. Still other things we don't like--we don't want them to happen, and we take steps to get rid of them or to keep them from happening again.
>
> Now,...if it is in our power to create any of the situations which a person likes or to remove any situation he doesn't like, we can control his behavior. When he behaves as we want him to behave, we simply create a situation he likes, or remove one he doesn't like. As a result, the probability that he will behave that way again goes up, which is what we want. Technically, it's called 'positive reinforcement.'" (Skinner, 1948, p. 259)

The treatments do not vary from this basic approach, although they do in method and apparatus used. Jones (1960), for example, has treated an eneuretic child by having him sleep in a bed whose sheets were wired to ring a bell when wet. In order to relieve itself from this startling awakening, the body wakens itself when bladder pressure begins to build. Sometimes this learning can take place in one night, if the child happens to urinate frequently enough.

Liversedge and Sylvester (1955) treated writer's cramp and tremors while writing by administering a shock whenever the undesired behavior took place. Their results are truly startling: 3-5 weeks after treatment was begun, their patients were able to stop therapy. It should be noted that these patients had been afflicted with tremors or cramp for 3-10 years before coming to the behavior therapists.

Leuret's technique, however, is the most interesting. Though he died in 1851, he is considered to have been one of the forefathers of behaviorism. He treated psychotics like this:

> "Tell me what I want to hear, or I'll dump you into a cold shower."

He explained that this worked (in one case in 2 days, in another "instantly") because "He (the patient) makes the admission (that he is not Napoleon) not because he has changed his mind, but because he is afraid of the showers, and perceives that giving in is the only means in his power to avoid them." (as quoted in Wolpe and Theriault, 1968.)

Well, now; that certainly is what I'd call controlling the environment, and leaving the patient very little room to maneuver. Reminds me of something Farber said .... "Tell the man what he wants to hear, or he'll fail your ass out of the course." But no ... there couldn't be any real connection, could there?

Let's look to the schoolroom, then, in the light of a controlled environment, and see how behavior can be changed for (what ought to be) the better.

School appears to be one of the best places for using a contingency contract (as is a psychiatric hospital. You draw the connection.) at least from the results reported in Olson, Smith & Olson, 1971. Chattering children in the schoolroom will be quiet if they believe that by changing their behavior ("quiet," by the way, is the <u>desired</u> behavior--whether that is <u>natural</u> or not seems not to be the point) they can change their schoolroom into a place where they get candy, tokens, freetime, and/or any other goodies (reinforcers) they desire. It all comes down, as I see it, to the basic idea that people need to feel they can exercise some control over their environment. If changing their behavior is the only thing that will change the environment, then they'll do it, for the pleasure of the results--but also, I feel, for the pleasure of knowing that they are alive, that what they do makes some difference in the world around them.

Before going on to contracting with adolescent delinquents, I would like to make one brief observation:

There is a direct relationship between the essentially surface point of view on the part of behavior therapists which is directly related to their use of seemingly surface techniques, which in turn is related to the rapidity of cure:

The analyst works "in the dark," sometimes for years, without ever really knowing, as he does so, if the technique being applied is the optimal one for this particular patient. For the behavior therapist, however, whose feedback system is in observable, measurable view, this "dark timespan" need not occur. If technique A doesn't show effective behavior change, he'll switch to technique B, and so on, until he finds the one that works. This can take place over no more than two sessions.

Furthermore, the behaviorist is looking only for a behavior change. Focusing down on it as he does increases the chance of his finding one, and further, increases the chance of the patient producing a behavioral change, since that is presumably all that is being asked of him.

And last, a "cyclic" effect goes into operation when the patient changes his mode of behavior from "maladaptive" to "adaptive." People start responding to him differently, more positively. Especially when the contract involves the whole family, the people around the patient all day can be acting as reinforcing agents; this multiplies the therapy hours, in effect, to 24 per day:

Where the adolescent is concerned, his ability to abide by his contract tells those around him that he is becoming more mature, more responsible, etc., and they respond to him accordingly. This, in turn, sets up an answering behavior in him. He tends to live by the image which he himself has set up in abiding by his contract, which further reinforces the adults around him, which, in turn, further reinforces the spiral of adaptive behaviors, and so on down the Mobius Strip.

Furthermore, from the adolescent's point of view, when he is "negatively reinforced" according to the rules set forth in the contract, it stops being an arbitrary <u>punishment</u>, and becomes a

contingency. He need no longer concern himself with the "subsurface hostility" punishments usually spring from, for a contract is, after all, an impersonal arbitrator.

You will find the contract of Candy Bremer (Stuart, 1971) on the following page. This patient, a delinquent, was "cured" of her delinquent tendencies in just 3 blocks of 24 days each. "When court wardship was terminated and the contract was the only behavioral prosthesis, Candy's behavior actually continued to improve." (Stuart, 1971, p. 8)

There is no doubt that abiding by the contract is preferable to attending reform school, prison, or a psychiatric ward. Nevertheless, if one reads the contract from Candy's point of view, it seems that this is a strange society indeed in which such a contract can be the least of a number of possible evils.

Holt (1964) has something interesting to say about this: I mention it because he says it so well:

> "We have made him afraid, consciously, deliberately, so that we might more easily control his behavior and get him to do whatever we wanted him to do.
>
> I am horrified to realize how much I myself use fear and anxiety as instruments of control . . . the methods I use for getting the work done and controlling the behavior rest ultimately on fear, fear of getting in wrong with me, or the school, or their parents . . . What I do boils down to a series of penalties, which are effective in exactly the proportion that they rouse the kind of fears that I have been trying to dispel . . . .
>
> What sense does this make?" (p. 96, 97)

Fig. 5. Behavioral Contract.

PRIVILEGES	RESPONSIBILITIES
General	
In exchange for the privilege of remaining together and preserving some semblance of family integrity, Mr. and Mrs. Bremer and Candy all agree to	concentrate on positively reinforcing each other's behavior while diminishing the present overemphasis upon the faults of the others.
Specific	
In exchange for the privilege of riding the bus directly from school into town after school on school days	Candy agrees to phone her father by 4:00 p.m. to tell him that she is all right and to return home by 5:15 p.m.
In exchange for the privilege of going out at 7:00 p.m. on one weekend evening without having to account for her whereabouts	Candy must maintain a weekly average of "B" in the academic ratings of all of her classes and must return home by 11:30 p.m.
In exchange for the privilege of going out a second weekend night	Candy must tell her parents by 6:00 p.m. of her destination and her companion, and must return home by 11:30 p.m.
In exchange for the privilege of going out between 11:00 a.m. and 5:15 p.m. Saturdays, Sundays and holidays	Candy agrees to have completed all household chores before leaving and to telephone her parents once during the time she is out to tell them that she is all right.
In exchange for the privilege of having Candy complete household chores and maintain her curfew	Mr. and Mrs. Bremer agree to pay Candy $1.50 on the morning following days on which the money is earned.

Bonuses and Sanctions

If Candy is 1-10 minutes late	she must come in the same amount of time earlier the following day, but she does not forfeit her money for the day.
If Candy is 11-30 minutes late	she must come in 22-60 minutes earlier the following day and does forfeit her money for the day.
If Candy is 31-60 minutes late	she loses the privilege of going out the following day and does forfeit her money for the day.
For each half hour of tardiness over one hour, Candy	loses her privilege of going out and her money for one additional day.
Candy may go out on Sunday evenings from 7:00 to 9:30 p.m. and either Monday or Thursday evening	if she abides by all the terms of this contract from Sunday through Saturday with a total tardiness not exceeding 30 minutes which must have been made up as above.
Candy may add a total of two hours divided among one to three curfews	if she abides by all the terms of this contract for two weeks with a total tardiness not exceeding 30 minutes which must have been made up as above and if she requests permission to use this additional time by 9:00 p.m.

MONITORING

Mr. and Mrs. Bremer agree to keep written records of the hours of Candy's leaving and coming home and of the completion of her chores.

Candy agrees to furnish her parents with a school monitoring card each Friday at dinner.

_____

_____

_____

(Stuart, 1971)

While T*H*E B*R*E*A*K*E*R*S are not properly within the province of this paper, I do feel that the quotes and comments which follow are related; therefore, they appear.

To find out what The Breakers' relationship is to the Broken, and to learning theory, see the following pages which are, I believe, self-explanatory.

". . .our society, in general, does not care much for youth. This means that, in spite of the fact that we make available to our youth incredible sums of money, we exploit them, mock their attempts at self-expression, and do not provide them with opportunities for living "manly," dignified, and productive adolescent lives. The evidence for this has been put before us . . .But, like other educationists, we will ignore what they have said, although for different reasons. In our case, the truth is simply too depressing, even overwhelming to face. Its acknowledgment could well drive anyone proposing educational innovation into a state of intellectual catatonia. One must make certain assumptions in order to get on with one's work. Therefore, let us assume that America values its youth, that our community leaders want youth to know reality and not just fantasy, and that our teachers do not fear youth and their need to know about the world they live in." (Postman and Weingartner, 1969, p. 57-58)

I will gladly make that assumption, Dr. Postman, Dr. Weingartner, and Dr. Educator, if you will tell me that there is no truth to learning theory, to cognitive dissonance and identity consistency theories, and tell me that the behaviors required of the adolescent (particularly in school) spring naturally from his body and his heart. Tell me there is no efficacy in brainwashing techniques. (I won't even bring up the characteristic "ego-weakened" state of the adolescent himself.) Tell me all the items in the preceding sentences are unrelated, and that the strange fluid geometry I see emerging from the data I've collected is unbiased, and that this equation is <u>not</u> reversible:

LEARNING ⟹ BEHAVIOR CHANGE

Tell me that Dr. Laing's statement is totally absurd:

> "A child born today in the United Kingdom stands a ten times greater chance of being admitted to a mental hospital than to a university, and about one fifth of mental hospital admissions are diagnosed "schizophrenic." This can be taken as an indication that we are driving our children mad more effectively than we are genuinely educating them. Perhaps it is our way of educating them that is driving them mad." (R.D. Laing, M.D. 1967, p. 104)

OH DEAR, I'VE LEFT SOMETHING OUT!

DID I TELL YOU THE LAST STRAW?

YOU'D THINK THE FIXERS WOULD BE ON THE KIDS' SIDE, WOULDN'T YOU?

So did I.

Well, kid, maybe you'd better move that little yellow button to your groin.

Here comes the clincher.

A PAPER ON BEHAVIOR THERAPY AND THE ADOLESCENT,

BY

Carole Berlin,
LSUNO

IN WHICH THE AUTHOR TRIES TO DISCOVER MORE ABOUT THE MOBIUS STRIP

and finds---------->

that the literature on behavior therapy and the adolescent is virtually non-existent.

Feeling that if anybody can help the adolescent, it is the behavior therapist,

the author then looks into the reasons for this paucity of literature where there should be an overabundance.

Finding that the reasons are based in the culture and the times, the author goes a little bit further, and finds such interesting trivia as:

---------->

Though the principles of behavior therapy had been laid out by Hull and Skinner in the 1940's, there was not even a NAME for Behavior Therapy until 1958 (Wolpe & Lazarus, 1966). And, as late as 1964, adolescent psychiatry was still "struggling to be born as a discrete specialty." (Holmes, 1964) There were too few medical schools including courses in adolescent psychiatry (Balser, 1957) to have produced any specialists in adolescent psychiatry to write articles for publication for the author to find. [Rarely is the therapist to whom the adolescent is sent a specialist in the disorders of adolescence. (Holmes, 1964; Balser, 1957).]

HOW COME? How come this phenomenon of the hazy adolescent state hasn't got "fixers" of its own?

Surely, people have noticed that adolescents are <u>different</u> from you and me. Somebody must have wanted to help the adolescent somewhere along the line . . .

The answer is, people have tried. But the adolescent, well,

he's so difficult,

he turns people off.

That is to say,

by his behavior,

he sets up a chain of events which lead the therapist in the helping relationship to turn away from him. And, should the therapist decide to accept him as a patient, from the therapist's point of view, the patient is either an immature adult or an overgrown child. This does not bode well for the adolescent,

whose range of "tolerable" behaviors is

different from,

and smaller than,

that of the adult or child.

In the words of the therapists:---------->

"Children usually cannot decide that they need help, and adolescents often resist help. In the case of children, the parents can act as change agents. In the case of adolescents (this is also true but) usually not as much as with children. There is a greater handicap in therapy with adolescents than with children . . .the therapist is not deterred with children, but with adolescents, he often is. (Phillips, 1966)

Holmes tells us more about this "deterring" process. He tells us WHY:

Calling it "another source of chronic vexation for the adult," he describes "the youngster's greatly sharpened alertness to the needs and motivations of other people, and his special sensitivity to that intricate complex of social fictions to which well-adjusted adults have subscribed en masse. (Holmes, 1964, p. 50)

The adolescent then uses this sensitivity/awareness as a weapon with which he "trifles . . .with the therapist's emotional investment in his therapeutic success." (Holmes, 1964, p. 50)

God knows, he's got little else to use as a weapon. Why shouldn't he use it? And why should you turn away from him because he uses what little weapon he has? Letting the thorns keep you away from roses is fine, I suppose, . . .unless you've put the thorns there in the first place. It's a first-class excuse for sticking to primroses and daisies. . .

Many therapists claim that the adolescent presents too much of a challenge:

The skills appropriate to children, and/or those appropriate to the adult are not appropriate to the adolescent, says Berman. Peltz tells us he's too mature for the techniques of play therapy, and not ready for "ordinary adult therapy on the level of verbal communication."

Josselyn sums it up, thus: "Therapy with the adolescent would appear to require the utilization of all known therapeutic techniques. These variations of technique apply not only to different patients, but must also be available in each therapeutic hour. Therapy of the adolescent must be as changeable as the adolescent himself." (In Balser.)

Finally, he presents a problem for the diagnostician, which is perhaps the most interesting "problem" of all:

> "What might be considered to be neurotic manifestations in adults appear temporarily in many adolescents as normal and natural phenomena which usually subside spontaneously." (Peltz, in Balser.)

MAYBE THE KID'S JUST PRACTICING HOW TO BE A GROWNUP.

Perhaps some of the difficulty for the therapist lies in the fact that (adolescent turmoil being a relatively recent cultural phenomenon) there is as yet very little normative data on THE ADOLESCENT in our culture. Certainly the norms established by Gesell for children have been found useful; children have been around longer (as have adults) than adolescents . . . therefore we know more about them...therefore we find them easier to deal with . . .therefore we would rather deal with them... or deal with the adolescent as a child--i.e. regress him-------.
[see p. 10,(#1), and p. 35 (all)]

Oh, tell me that the data I've collected is incomplete; I'll agree.
Tell me that the lacunae in my knowledge are various and large ...
tell me that I really know very little about learning theory after all,
and I'll agree.

But don't tell me that the pieces in the puzzle on the following pages don't fit together,

Because I think they do.

Why don't the Fixers show the Adolescents how to respond to a good challenge?
Are they afraid the kids might learn?

Why don't the Adolescents tell the Fixers how to fix them?
Are they afraid they might get fixed, and upset the subsurface equilibrium and stasis they're caught in?

What would it mean if the young pushed the old aside?

That they're human?
That they're animal?
That they're alive?

What does it mean if they DON'T?

That they're maturing later because they'll be living longer, and it sometimes gets boring around here if you go too fast?

Two tales follow.

Following them is a page entitled "Grafitti," or "The writing's on the wall we're up against." You can paste it up and throw darts at it. I might join you. Not because I think what's on it is <u>not</u> true,
but because I think it <u>is</u>.

This popular game has been played by a master, Ivan Pavlov. He wasn't playing with adolescents, but with dogs.

You teach the dog he's going to get shocked shortly after he hears a bell. He learns to lift his leg, thereby avoiding the shock. If he can't lift that leg (say you tie it down, as Pavlov did) he soon learns to "generalize"--he'll lift another leg, either the one on that same side, or (if you've immobilized that one too,) any available leg.

You might note that dogs have only four legs. Therefore, if you tie all four of them down and ring the bell -- well, that dog knows that shock is coming; he's not dumb*, even if he is only a dog.
He can't DO anything about it -- nothing, that is, unless he can bud another leg.
So he struggles against the harness,
and he whines,
and he goes through all those "behaviors" in his repertoire which have been left open to him (screaming, biting at the harness, shivering, hating), but, naturally, none of them is going to "work" the way leg-lifting does ...and he knows that. But he can't get out, and solve his "avoidance" problem that way.

CONCLUSION

This is for the purpose of evolving dogs who can lift all four legs simultaneously, especially when they're all tied down.**

---

*If he were smart enough to have acted dumb in the first place, he'd be out in the fields right now, instead of shivering in the laboratory, refusing to eat.

**Or for evolving dogs who are able to remove their minds from the environment, so that it is no longer painful to them consciously. That this means a strain of dogs who are by most standards "insane" is irrelevant.

Have you ever felt this way yourself? If you have, please turn to page 24. Read Laing's comment. Write your own comment just below Laing's.

Here's how society plays it with the kids:

First you teach him an acceptable childlike repertoire of behaviors (or he learns from the environment; same thing.) when he's a child. Then nature takes over, and you add your "push to tell him he's too old; he must go forward."

Then, when he closes the door of childhood behind him, you block the door in front of him.

This leaves him in limbo.

Then, while he's trapped in limbo, you frustrate him,

all the time leaving him no acceptable behavior with which to reduce his anxiety, as neither the ways of childhood nor adulthood are suitable at this time/place.

Now, some will regress, retreat, refuse all nourishment from the environment. We call this apathy. It's really a statement: "I can't play any more. I want to go home; I don't feel well."

Some will regress even further, push the childhood door open again with the force born of desperation, while others will do just the opposite: start banging on the door in front of them, until they too have "gotten through."

The latter group goes to jail, not always directly, and not always after having passed "go" and collecting their 200 dollars. The first and second groups are another kind of problem. Often we call them neurotic.

Then we say: Say, kid, looks like something's bothering you. Wanna talk? I'll listen.

Timid, unsure, wanting to trust, he crawls halfway out of his snailshell; you've woken the dormant one again; he's hopeful, curious.

Then you tell him he has to talk to you ONLY IN A CERTAIN WAY. You smack him over the head, saying: Don't talk crazy, (read: "emotionally,") talk RIGHT. No matter what he says, don't listen. Pretend you are afraid of him, or just get him out into the open and stare at him like you don't know what he's talking about. This is called "communication failure." What it means is, you just don't listen.

Isn't that fun? What do you suppose happens? What do you suppose is going to happen?

Wanna know what I think?

I think they're going to bud.

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2. DO NOT TOUCH!!
UNTIL AFTER
READING P.4.

For Presentation
APGA '73 Convention

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Carole Berlin, Presenter
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